

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION REPORT

CD NO.

COUNTRY USSR (Caucasus)

DATE DISTR. 14 SEP 49

25X1C SUBJECT New Sukhumi - Batumi Highway Bridge across the Yenguri River

NO. OF PAGES 2

PLACE ACQUIRED

NO. OF ENCLS. 3
(LISTED BELOW)

DATE OF INFO

SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.

25X1X

25X1X

1. [redacted] worked on the construction of a 700 meter highway bridge over the Yenguri River in the vicinity of Rukhi, approximately seven kilometers north of the town of Zugdidi. Its disproportionate size is accounted for by the fact that the Yenguri at this point has reached its delta, a sandy, swampy, occasionally inundated area. The bridge is an important link in the Sukhumi - Batumi highway which runs more or less parallel to the Black Sea littoral about twenty-five kilometers inland.

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2. Although surveys and preparatory work such as the pouring of the concrete pillars were begun in 1940, the actual bridge construction was not launched until the spring of 1947. [redacted] In April 1948, the heavy T-jirders had already been placed on the concrete pillars, which were spaced thirty meters apart, but the concrete road-bed had not yet been poured. About that same time, work was temporarily suspended while almost the entire work battalion of 600 men (only 60 remained behind) was sent to work on several road projects at Riza - Tel, Stalin's summer home and hunting lodge. After completion of the Riza projects, the PWs are reported to have been returned to Rukhi to finish the bridge construction.

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3. The actual work was under the supervision of a Volga-German (Volendeutch) engineer who was extraordinarily kind to the prisoners. His authority over them, however, was very limited. The work battalion was part of an engineer division (Pioneer-division) which, in turn, was under the authority of the Soviet Army. Soviet officers determined the amount of work and the intensity with which it was to be accomplished.

4. The Sukhumi - Batumi coastal highway runs from Zugdidi in a northerly direction until it branches in the vicinity of Rukhi. [redacted] the western branch of the road served through-traffic, which, after a two kilometer stretch, crosses the first arm of the river by means

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Class CHANGED TO: TS S C

(DDA Memo. 4 Apr 77)

Auth: DDA REG. 77/1783

This document is hereby regraded to CONFIDENTIAL in accordance with the letter of 16 October 1973 from the Director of Central Intelligence to the Archivist of the United States. Date: 2003

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of a ferry boat. Seven hundred meters farther down the road, a stretch which leads through a sandy and swampy flood area, another ferry carries traffic across the second and main channel of the Yenguri River. Both channels are about forty to fifty meters wide. On the other side of the river a serpentine road runs up the sloping bank to the new highway, from which the detour had departed at Rudhi.

5. The construction camp, which includes a small saw mill, warehouse, and several workshops, is located near the southern approach to the bridge. There are also three dwellings in which a number of Soviet officers and members of the building staff are housed. Connecting this camp with the detour about one kilometer away is a temporary road which serves the transport of building materials to the camp site.
6. The superstructure of the bridge rests on oval concrete pillars which measure ten to twenty meters in height and approximately two meters in diameter. Spaced at thirty-meter intervals, they sit upon heavy concrete bases, measuring 3 x 4 x 4 meters, which are imbedded in the ground. The heavy iron T-girders which span the pillars have an estimated length of twenty to twenty-five meters and a weight of twenty-five tons. At the approach to the bridge, these girders are riveted together with the 150-meter-long bridge sections; then, in a very difficult procedure, the section is placed on the cement pillars by means of cranes and manpower. (The iron Double T-girders, running the direction of the road, were placed on the cement pillars in a quadruplicate arrangement (See Attachment III).)* The primitive building methods resulted in numerous accidents. The riveting, which was first done by careless Soviet workers, was completed by a special Stakhanov riveting group on a twenty-four-hour work schedule. At the time of source's departure, the T-girders were already in place across the entire length of the bridge. The structure was scheduled for completion around the end of 1948.

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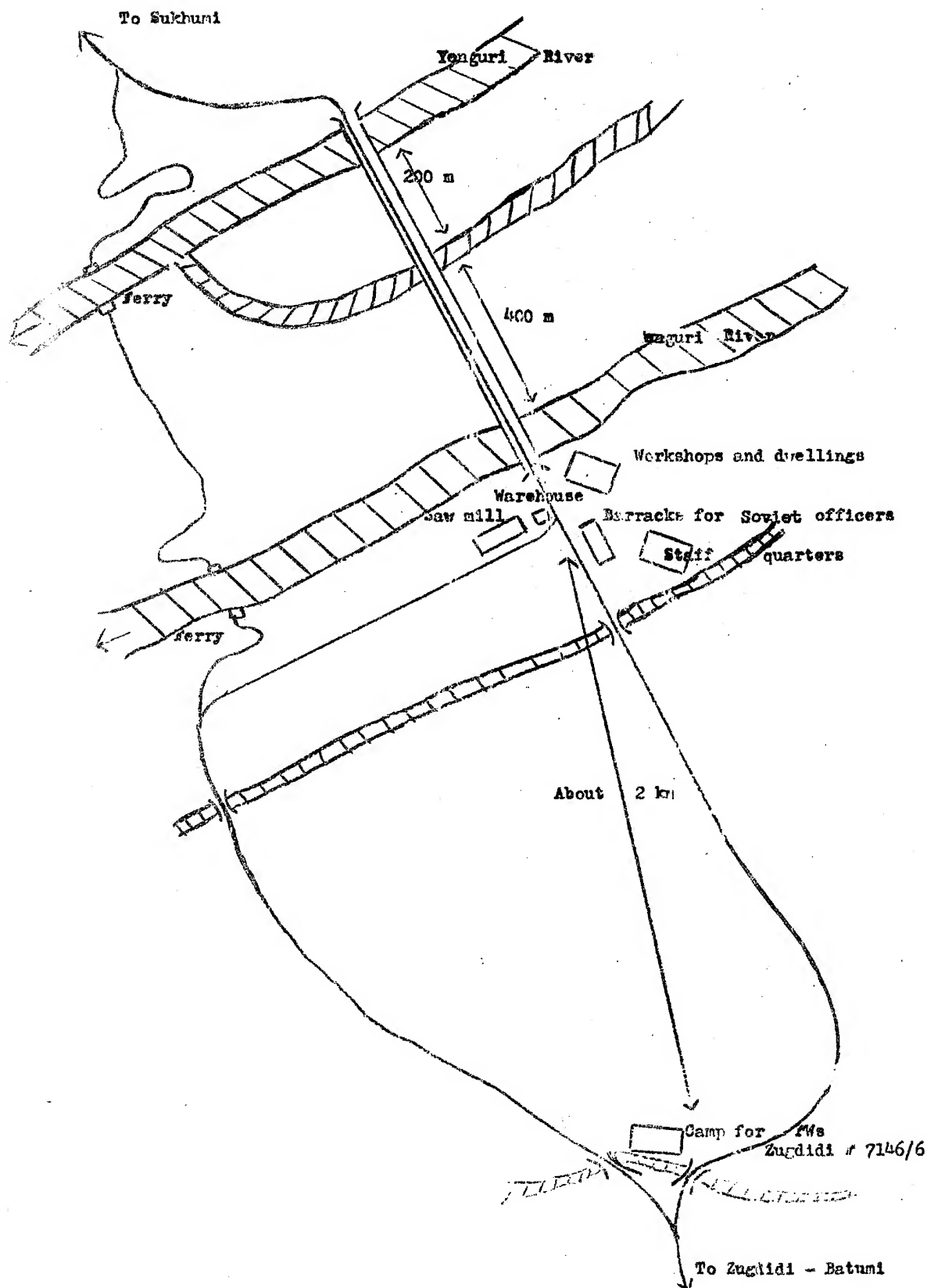
Comment: There appear to be several discrepancies between the text and the sketch on attachment III.

- * ENCLOSURES: Attachment I (Sketch of bridge and Yenguri Delta)
 " II (Sketch of Sukhumi-Batumi area)
 " III (Sketch of bridge components)

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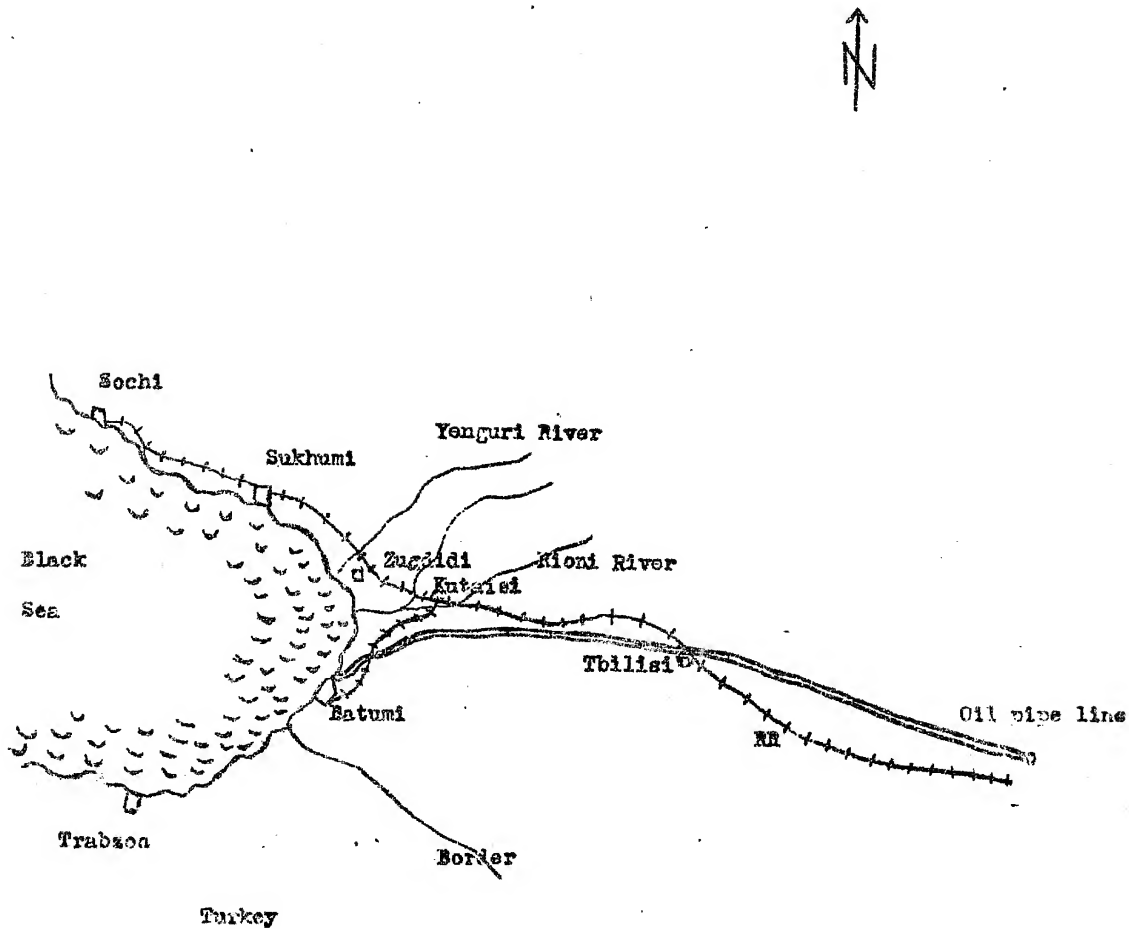
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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
ATTACHMENT I

Yenguri River Bridge



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ATTACHMENT II

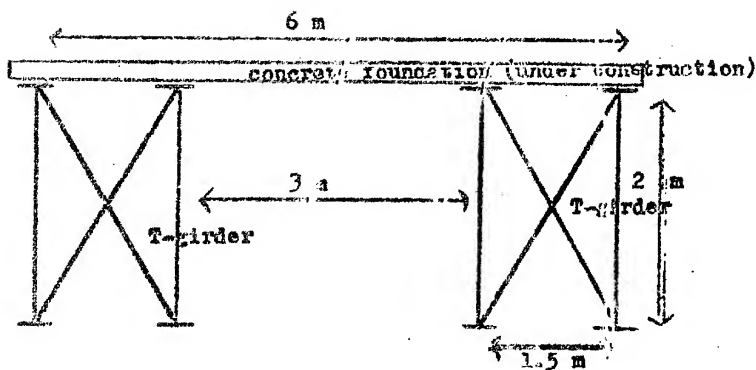
SKETCH OF THE SUKHUMI - BATUMI AREA



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ATTACHMENT III

Cross Section of the Iron Work
on the Yengui Bridge



Side view of the bridge

